FEBRUARY 5, 2025

The Imminent Neoreactionary Threat to the American Republic

This evidence brief was iteratively and collectively compiled by a broad, bipartisan, and decentralized network of experts who wish to remain anonymous due to concerns about being targeted. The aim is to provide a central and comprehensive resource documenting and explaining the nature of the current political crisis to journalists who are attempting to inform the public.

Overview

Events of the last three weeks constitute a greater and more immediate threat to the American Constitutional order than has yet been widely recognized. While America's attention is now trained on the chaos, illegality, and unprecedented aggression with which Elon Musk's team is inserting itself into the U.S. government, **the threat is an order of magnitude beyond an executive power grab.**

As documented below, Musk is tied to a broader group (including Peter Thiel, Marc Andreessen, other Silicon Valley tech elites, and thought leader Curtis Yarvin) called the Neoreactionaries (NRx), whose extremist ambitions - if realized - are an **immediate, existential threat to the very existence of the American nation-state.** The Neoreactionaries have openly stated their aims: to destroy the nation-state and the Constitutional order and replace them with a new privately owned corporate state, to be run by a CEO-dictator. Citizens become subjects owned by the state - "state slaves" - because "everything rots when it has no owner—human beings included" (Yarvin 12/28/24).

The path to such a dystopia is to take control of the "nervous system of the state" - data, information, and communication systems - and then use the leverage that infrastructure affords to grab power and silence resistance. **Musk's team is well on its way to achieving this, and their takeover must be halted if we are to have elections and a legislature through which to settle our differences.** The evidence for taking this threat seriously is laid out in an accompanying brief.

The most dramatic reversals of democratic breakdown (1977 India; 2022 Brazil; 2023 Poland) have been accomplished by **radically large-tent, cross-ideological coalitions** with little in common except a desire for the continuation of a Constitutional order. Evidence suggests that the present threat to American democracy is dire enough that **such a broad-tent approach focused on Musk and his associates may be required.**

Table of Contents

I. The New Shape of Threats to the American Republic

1. National Security
2. Constitutional Republic
3. The Neoreactionary Movement's Agenda

II. Understanding Recent Events in the Context of Threats to the American Republic

1. Treasury Department Infiltration and Financial System Risks
2. Noncompliance with Congressional Appropriations
3. DOGE
4. OPM

III. Appendices

1. Neoreactionary Thought Leaders
2. Known DOGE Employees and Backgrounds
3. National Security Threats: Foreign Ties and Single-Source Military Risks
4. Policy and Investigation Tools for Congress
5. Attacks on the information environment (Kristina?)

I. The New Shape of Threats to the American Republic

The evidence in this brief shows that Elon Musk's attempt to "move fast and break things" in the federal government is not merely a shift in management style, but rather an actual attempt to destroy the U.S. government and our Constitutional order, with grave implications for American liberty, national security and the rule of law. It is harder to recognize these threats because in the digital age, they have taken on a new shape that is not yet familiar. Coups and national security breaches used to look like outside political actors storming statehouses, "insiders" sneaking classified information out, or "outsiders" breaking in. In the digital age, a *de facto* takeover can be less overt, less detectable, and less often an exchange between insiders and outsiders so much as a blurring of their identity in the first place.

While the shape of threats to the American republic has changed, their gravity remains the same. **If non-governmental actors (by which we mean unelected, unratified, unvetted, untrained, unconstrained, and/or unaccountable actors) gain access to key digital infrastructure, they**

can seize control of critical functions of government in ways that will be difficult or impossible to reverse.

National Security

Safeguarding U.S. national security is fundamentally about protecting the Constitution and the Nation from all enemies, foreign and domestic, by preventing exposure of American assets, personnel, and infrastructure to foreign governments and non-state actors. Musk/DOGE espouse anti-Constitutional ideologies, are under the influence of America's principal foreign adversaries (China and Russia), and lack essential experience in cybersecurity. Their control of critical digital infrastructure and personnel therefore constitute a vital and immediate threat to US national security.

- Elon Musk poses a uniquely significant security risk. His foreign ties led his lawyers to advise that he not pursue a higher security clearance: his financial interests are dependent on China, his companies are financed by Russian oligarchs, and his extensive military contracts leave the US government sole-source dependent on his space and satellite companies. He is centralizing access under his own control: he has presidential authorization, and when career officials challenge the Musk team's access based on security concerns, they are immediately removed.

- A small core group now controls key infrastructure (such as the Treasury payments system) and massive amounts of data. This group is known to be influenced by both foreign power adversaries and radical anti-Constitutional ideologies (see Appendices 2 and 3), unvetted by any aspect of the US government, and inexperienced at managing cybersecurity risks. (For example: demanding an unclassified email naming newly hired CIA personnel.)

- Musk's team's broad, centralized access to US data systems creates risks that dwarf prior data breaches. Secure data systems are, by design, decentralized, internally compartmentalized, and managed with redundant layers of oversight. While this can make them inefficient, it also limits damage from unauthorized access (decentralized), protects from malicious but authorized access like insider threats (compartmented), and provides warning if something is amiss (oversight). The DOGE team's actions attempt to circumvent all three standard safeguards. By creating a single access point without time for threat modeling, security planning, and oversight the Musk team has created "efficiencies" that massively expand access risks, and are a tempting target for foreign governments and non-state actors.

- The Musk team's use of private servers and infrastructures, as reported at OPM and elsewhere, allows exfiltration of data, either into a new internal system or to outside actors, without oversight or records. Private infrastructure also allows use of AI-assisted data processing to join multiple data sets, creating detailed information about targets, or to train AI models for surveillance, policy targeting and more. Once data is leaked, whether to companies, ideological groups, or foreign governments, it is impossible to recover.

In addition to the risks of data access, damage to state capacity leads to direct national security threats. Creating uncertainty and chaos around the stability of government payments undermines the ability of the US government to enter into foreign or domestic contracts, including for security and other critical needs. After the USAID funding freeze, prison guards at a facility holding ISIS affiliates in Syria walked off the job (returning only once their funding was extended for two weeks).

In a typical partisan changeover, the incoming administration would act with great care to preserve American power and state capacity. In contrast, the actions of the incoming Musk team have destabilized state capacity and created significant, as yet not fully known, risks to American national security.

Constitutional Republic

Historically, rapid breakdown in Constitutional government - coups d'état - have taken a familiar form. Unelected rogue actors seize key government infrastructure (the state house, the presidential palace, the public television station) and use that infrastructure to consolidate power, fortifying themselves in government buildings, cutting off information, and arresting or killing government officials.

Musk and his associates are not recognizable as "outsiders" acting in overt opposition to the elected executive. They have been invited in by the legitimately elected President, who is not conducting an overt self-coup (i.e., declaring himself President-for-life, canceling elections, or openly nullifying the Constitution). Musk and his associates are not seizing buildings by force, arresting anyone, or committing violence.

However, a closer look shows that the substance of a coup -- the rapid seizure of state power and rule-making authority by unelected actors -- is indeed underway. In essence, a coup is a **1) rapid seizure of state power by unelected actors**, who acquire that power by **2) seizing critical government infrastructure** and **3) weaponizing it** to neutralize legitimate government actors' efforts to stop them. The unelected actors then use this power to **4) remake the rules of the political game** in a way that cannot easily be checked or undone through democratic processes.

All four of these steps are now unfolding in real time in the United States, but in the present case - led by Neoreactionary tech oligarchs in the digital age - these steps have taken a new (and thus difficult-to-recognize) form:

> **1) Seizure of state power by unelected actors:** While Musk and his associates are working with the apparent approval of the President, they are nevertheless unelected, unvetted by Congress, and have been exempted from standard security screening practices designed to ensure alignment between civil servants and the interests of the American government. These actors are rapidly taking control of the central nervous system of the government - internal government communications systems, data structures, chains of command - and gaining access to critical and sensitive government data that can be used to wield - and potentially abuse - state power, including the social

security numbers, bank accounts, and home addresses of government workers and payments data from the National Treasury.

2) Seizure of critical government infrastructure: In 2025, critical government infrastructure is largely digital. The basic functions of government - from law enforcement, national security, and natural disaster relief to taxation, contracts, and service provision - are mediated by information and communication systems, In the digital age, taking control of data and communication structures (e.g. the Treasury payments system, federal personnel records, and other sensitive digital resources) IS seizing key government infrastructure.

3) Weaponizing government infrastructure to neutralize opposition by legitimate actors:

The data Musk's team is accessing can be powerfully weaponized against civil servants, politicians in other branches of government, and members of civil society and the general public. The data in Musk's team's control includes personnel data (including sensitive security clearance details) from anyone who has ever had federal employment as well as treasury and payments data about taxpayers, government contractors, Social Security recipients, and bondholders. Such data may be compromising if strategically leaked and could be used to facilitate targeting, blackmail, spurious lawsuits, and threats from internet mobs. Control of the Treasury payments system enables targeted defunding of potential opposition organizations, effectively disarming them.

4) Remaking the rules of the political game so they cannot be easily undone through Constitutional processes: Novel technology tools like cryptocurrency and blockchain can be used to effectively change the rules of the political game even without overtly rewriting them. Without canceling elections, for example, cryptocurrency can be used to create informal but powerful new levers of political influence: politicians can sell personal coins to unknown buyers who "vote" on public policy on the basis of their shareholder power, shielded from public view. Moreover, changes in the formal rules become much easier to make once leaders obtain enough leverage from steps 1-3. Statements by these leaders indicate they are aiming for radical, antidemocratic changes in the formal rules.

The Neoreactionary (NRx) Movement's Agenda

These threats to democracy and national security are tied to a larger plan. Elon Musk is part of a Silicon Valley elite group (including Peter Thiel, Marc Andreessen, David Sacks, Balaji Srinivasan, and JD Vance) that has been funding, developing, and advancing an extremist ideology as leaders and supporters of the Neoreactionary movement (or “NRx,” or the “Dark Enlightenment”). The aim of the neoreactionary movement is to bring about the collapse of the nation-state, democratic institutions, and what they call "The Cathedral" -- establishment institutions including academia, the mainstream media, and the administrative state. They

advocate replacing the existing Constitutional system with a privatized state structure akin to a corporation, with a monarch-like figure at the top modeled after a CEO. The CEO/monarch would control an oligarchy, much like a feudal system. There would be no accountability of the CEO/monarch to citizens, but rather to shareholders. Those who would be accorded political voice would be "the best" people, understood as those with the highest IQ.

The ideologues behind this movement (Curtis Yarvin and Nick Land) are so extreme that they have been dismissed as marginal crackpots in a weird corner of the Internet. But their ideas have been embraced by Musk, Thiel, and other billionaires with enormous influence inside the new administration *and* over the technologies that can be used as direct tools or political leverage to put these ideas into practice.

The Neoreactionary Movement's leader, Curtis Yarvin, outlined a strategic plan in an essay in 2022. Calling for a "full reboot of the USG [United States Government]," he said, "we can only do this by giving *absolute sovereignty to a single organization"* (i.e., the executive branch), of which Trump would be the "Board Chair" and an "experienced executive" would be CEO. "The CEO Trump picks will run the executive branch without any interference from the Congress or courts, probably also taking over state and local governments," Yarvin wrote. He later elaborated: America needs a "unitary executive'... so much 'more powerful' than the present office, [such] that the President considers *both* the judicial and legislative branches purely *ceremonial* and *advisory.*"

Yarvin's seven-part "Butterfly Revolution" has been roughly summarized as follows:

> 1) Have Trump run for president on the platform of getting rid of an inefficient system
>
> 2) Once he wins, purge the bureaucracy ("RAGE" - Retire All Government Employees)
>
> 3) Ignore the courts, through declaring states of emergency
>
> 4) Co-opt Congress
>
> 5) Centralize the police (federalize the national guard, create a national police force that absorbs local ones)
>
> 6) Shut down the elites -- the media and universities who make up "The Cathedral"
>
> 7) Get the people "on the streets" whenever there is any obstruction by a government agency.

These steps have clear parallels to the actions of the Musk team: the plan is unfolding in real time. Congress would be wise to take immediate action to prevent these radical plans from being rapidly and irreversibly implementing. **Section III articulates what Congress and other actors can do.**

II. Understanding Recent Events in the Context of Threats to the American Republic

Recent events suggest that Musk's team may be rapidly implementing elements of the Neoreactionary playbook, and that DOGE is the organizational and operational hub for these actions.

A. Treasury Department Infiltration and Financial System Risks

A1. Treasury | What Happened

The Treasury payments system is a major engine of the US economy, encompassing both real-time payment systems and the sensitive financial data of US citizens and businesses. Treasury payments amount to about a fifth of the US economy.

- On Friday, January 31, the Musk team gained access to the U.S. Treasury Department's payment system, which processes over $6 trillion annually in transactions including Social Security payments, military salaries, tax refunds, and federal grants. On the same day, the Treasury Department's top career official (David Lebryk) refused to grant DOGE "personnel" access to the system, and was then forced to resign.

- On Tuesday, February 4, multiple outlets confirmed that DOGE employees, including 25-year-old Marko Elez, have the capability not only to see the data in the payments system (read access) but write access, allowing them to alter the code base, change permissions, and alter transactions and records. Elez and other Musk staff have reportedly already deployed live, immediate changes to the programs that administer payments, aimed at making it easier to block payments and to hide records of payments blocked, made, or altered.

- The Treasury payments system is built on a complex legacy code base. This type of system can be safely modified only by teams with extensive (years) of experience in the business logic joining legacy systems. This is experience the DOGE team does not have.

- This coming weekend (February 7-8), the Treasury payments system has a long-standing migration scheduled. This migration may interact unpredictably with changes made to the code base.

- DOGE team members are giving Treasury engineers only their first names and refusing further identification. Moreover, it appears that the takeover occurred before Treasury Secretary Bessent's formal acknowledgement of DOGE control, leaving uncertainty as to who authorized or approved this action.

A2. Treasury | Legal, National Security, and Economic Implications

The takeover of Treasury data by an inexperienced, unvetted team with a single unaccountable individual at the top raises clear financial, security, ethical, and conflict-of-interest questions.

- **Threats to the US treasury are threats to the operations of the global financial markets, US federal, state, and local governments, and the real economy,** which the Treasury underpins by distributing federal entitlements, contract payments, debt service, and more. Control of the Treasury by partisan actors or unvetted personnel offers unprecedented power and opportunity for abuse of the system for political, personal, or foreign interests. A full description of the economic consequences of misuse (or even suspected misuse) of Treasury payment systems is outside the scope of this memo.

- **The takeover likely violates multiple federal laws.** Like OPM data security, Treasury payment infrastructure is strictly regulated under the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA). More generally, unauthorized modifications to existing Congressional appropriations raise both legal and Constitutional questions.

- **Rapid changes to the code base threaten the basic functioning of the entire Treasury payments system.** Modifying the code base may sound innocuous, but modernizing legacy code systems is complex and sensitive; it can pose significant risks to the ability of the system to correctly make its $6 trillion in payments.

- **Payment stoppages, via error or intentional freezes, risk damaging trust in the US government to reliably meet its obligations to creditors and contractors.**

- **Access to payments data allows the Musk team to engage in numerous activities that constitute economic and security risks:** spy on competitors to Musk's companies; identify and block payments to politically or personally disfavored individuals or companies; and intentionally or accidentally share data with foreign governments or non-state actors who could use it to bribe, blackmail, or surveil critical US personnel and companies.

- **Data access is especially concerning because the Musk team is inexperienced and unvetted.** Musk's strong ties to Russia and China are well known (and documented in the Appendix), but the government simply lacks information about foreign influence, blackmail risk, and other security concerns for the DOGE team.

- **Unilaterally blocking and erasing payments damages willingness to collaborate with the United States.** Contractors and partners will be reluctant to work with the US government if they fear that their payments could be cut off at any time, regardless of contract provisions. As discussed above, after the USAID funding freeze, prison guards at a facility holding ISIS affiliates in Syria walked off the job (returning only once their funding was extended for two weeks), while larger contractors have expressed their willingness to pursue contract provisions via the courts.

A3. Treasury | And the Neoreactionary Playbook

Curtis Yarvin's philosophy calls for deconstructing state control over financial and regulatory mechanisms, enabling private actors to assume control over core government functions, with an unaccountable monarch/CEO at the top. By infiltrating Treasury systems, Musk's network has taken a major step toward undermining federal fiscal autonomy and privatizing government decision-making. This Treasury infiltration follows Yarvin's model:

- **Damaging trust in the US dollar and dollar-denominated Treasury securities** creates a rationale for moving major aspects of US government finance to cryptocurrency, a long time goal of many Neoreactionaries.
- **Eliminating institutional resistance** by removing career professionals like David Lebryk.
- **Granting unchecked access to government financial systems** to ideological loyalists outside traditional oversight.
- **Centralizing control over government payment systems under a single unaccountable individual,** facilitating disruption of payments to individuals or groups disfavored by Musk's allies or political factions and positioning a single individual as .
- **Positioning private actors as the new arbiters of public finance**, setting a dangerous precedent for the privatization of federal payment mechanisms.

B: Noncompliance with Congressional Appropriations

B1: Appropriations | What Happened

The Musk team has taken direct aim at Congress's "power of the purse" in the two weeks since inauguration.

- On Monday, January 20, an executive order froze all foreign assistance administered through the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), with extremely limited exceptions for aid to Israel and Egypt. This led to a global stop work order on all development assistance.
- On Monday, January 27, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a memo freezing all domestic grants, which led to panic as Medicaid and other state-level websites went dark. On January 29, OMB issued guidance limiting the scope of the freeze, and then rescinding the memo; on the same day a judge issued an injunction against the order. Some entities, such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), did not immediately resume grant funding struggling to balance their Congressional mandate to increase participation of women and underrepresented groups in science with the OMB memo's instructions to eliminate DEI programs across all government-funded initiatives.

- Despite the injunction, the White House press secretary has insisted that the freeze remains in force, and Musk has claimed that his team is halting payments to specific contractors and grantees, such as Lutheran Social Services.

- Over the weekend of February 1, Musk took credit for "feeding USAID to the wood chipper." USAID employees were instructed not to appear for work on the morning of February 3, many civil servants and USAID foreign service officers reported being locked out of computer systems, and contractors were ordered to stop work. The USAID website currently diverts to the Department of State, and wide swathes of the Agency's programs appear to be missing.

- On Monday, February 3, Secretary of State Marco Rubio declared that he would be the new acting Administrator of USAID, and would assign day-to-day operations to Pete Marocco, the department's director of foreign assistance and a January 6 rioter.

- Late on Tuesday, February 4, the administration announced that all overseas USAID missions would be shut down by Friday, February 7. Staff were instructed that if the State department is unable to get all staff out of their countries within two days, they would be evacuated by the US military.

- Later that same day, all USAID employees were placed on administrative leave, except for a handful deemed essential (to be notified later); these instructions told staff they would need to return to the US within 30 days.

B2: Appropriations | Legal, Democratic Accountability, and National Security Implications

In addition to the impoundment of funds already appropriated by Congress, there are extensive legal, democracy-based, and national security implications of Musk's noncompliance:

- **The international aid freeze, the OMB memo, and the continued reports of frozen funds constitute unilateral action to "impound" tens of billions of dollars in already appropriated funds.** This directly contravenes the Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (ICA), which clearly states that the executive cannot temporarily or permanently withhold enacted funding, and establishes clear procedures that presidents must follow to propose delaying or rescinding funding. While the president may defer spending appropriated funds, he must submit a request to Congress. No such request has been issued or received. Additionally, it is unclear if funds frozen include those "required" or "mandated" to be spent, which cannot be frozen even via the ICA process (this category includes several US treaty and multi-lateral obligations). The ICA provisions regarding delayed or rescinded funding do not apply to funds that are "required" or "mandated" to be spent, which includes several US treaty and multi-lateral obligations.

- **Damaging trust in the US's willingness to fulfill its contractual obligations,** from contractors to Treasury payments to tariff/trade obligations.

- **The freeze has not ended:** Grantees and beneficiaries who have received "waivers" from the freeze have reported that funds have not been transferred, and reports from inside government agencies suggest that DOGE functionaries have seized the financial controls and are refusing to transfer funds, in violation of court orders.

    -
    - The consequences of the broken contracts with grant recipients and vendors due to the freeze and ending programs will be costly and damaging. These vendors include multinational corporations such as shipping companies contracted to transport food aid, who have already signaled a willingness to recoup their losses plus damages in court.

- **Enormous risk of corruption and elite capture by foreign interests:** Musk and his unvetted group of young adult programmers with dubious ties to foreign governments, corporations, and non-state actors have been given the power to bypass Congress and decide how the US government spends its budget, both foreign and domestic.

- **The tactics used against USAID may be used on other agencies** to bypass Congressional authority to make budgets and charter agencies. For example:

    - **Ignoring Congressional statutes:** Legal scholars agree that it would take an act of Congress to eliminate USAID, which was first created by an executive order in 1961 and established by statute as its own agency by Congress in 1998, or to consolidate it into the Department of State. Capitulation on this issue will ease the way for elimination of other agencies, including the Department of Education (established by Congress in 1979) and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (established through the Dodd-Frank Act in 2010).

    - **Removing funding for Congressionally mandated policy priorities:** USAID's funding and actions have been a critical element of the US strategy for competing with China and Russia for political and economic influence in the developing world. Moreover, anti-corruption and judicial reform initiatives have been key to combating transnational crime, corruption, human trafficking and terrorism. **Congress has the responsibility to participate in choices about curtailing these programs, which help to safeguard America's security.**

    - **Delegating crucial policy decisions to centralized, unaccountable members of the DOGE team**: they demanded access to sensitive materials (placing Agency senior leadership on leave when challenged), laid off thousands of contractors who were conducting the day-to-day work of the Agency, and recalled all USAID Foreign Service Officers to DC within the week.

    - **Threatening to use military resources as a way to deter civilian objections.**

B3: Appropriations | And the Neoreactionary Agenda

Neoreactionary philosophy calls for centralizing all power under a single individual, known variously as a monarch or CEO.

- **Curtis Yarvin advocates for a "'unitary executive'... so much 'more powerful' than the present office** that the President considers *both* the **judicial and legislative branches purely *ceremonial* and *advisory.*"**

- **Noncompliance with Congressional appropriations reduces Congress to a "ceremonial and advisory" role**, while ignoring court orders to halt impoundment **does the same for the courts.**

C. DOGE

C1. DOGE | What Happened

- In August 2024, Elon Musk proposed a government efficiency commission while interviewing Trump live on X, then posted an AI-generated image of himself on X labeled DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency).

- On January 20, 2025, the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) was created via executive order. Initially described as an external advisory body, DOGE has now been integrated into the federal government, giving it access to government-wide data systems, hiring processes, and policy implementation authority. The order mandates that each federal agency establish a "DOGE Team" of at least four employees, handpicked by agency heads in consultation with the USDS Administrator. These teams, along with DOGE's own appointees, have been tasked with implementing broad, loosely defined software modernization and efficiency reforms across all federal agencies.

- DOGE teams immediately gained access to critical government control centers, including the Office of Personnel Management and the Treasury payments system, where they have locked out and removed career officials. They have also been identified entering other offices, such as the Social Security Administration, NOAA, and more.

- While DOGE is officially part of the federal government, significant transparency and oversight concerns remain. The executive order does not clarify the extent of DOGE's authority, and the administration has suggested that DOGE's records may not be subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) due to its placement under the White House Chief of Staff. Additionally, unlike standard agencies governed by strict hiring and ethics requirements, DOGE operates with a special temporary status, allowing it to bypass certain federal employment laws, including security requirements.

- Elon Musk remains DOGE's lead official, but his exact role is intentionally ambiguous. The White House has designated him a special government employee (SGE), which subjects him to some federal ethics and conflict-of-interest laws but permits him to retain

control of his private businesses, including SpaceX, Tesla, xAI, and Starlink—all of which have federal contracts or regulatory interests. This arrangement presents serious conflicts of interest, particularly given the Federal Acquisition Regulation's (FAR) restrictions on SGEs influencing federal contracts when they or their affiliated businesses stand to benefit.

The restructuring of DOGE does not align with traditional conservative goals of reducing government size—instead, it centralizes power within an opaque, Musk-controlled network operating inside the federal system. DOGE's influence extends beyond streamlining bureaucracy; it is fundamentally reshaping federal governance, financial infrastructure, and national security protocols with minimal oversight. Furthermore, the backgrounds of these individuals further heighten concerns. Among them are young hires with little to no prior government experience, many coming from private-sector firms with clear conflicts of interest.

C2. DOGE | Potential legal and national security implications

DOGE, as constituted via the January 20 Executive Order and implemented by Elon Musk, is the operational center of an attempt to remake vital state functions. It has, at minimum, tested the boundaries of laws designed to ensure transparency and accountability in the executive branch. Some of the key questions include:

- **High-level access to sensitive data by unvetted Musk loyalists carries significant national security risks.** The executive order directs all agencies to provide DOGE teams "full and prompt access" to federal records, software, and IT systems. This potentially grants individuals without security clearances access to classified intelligence, financial data, and personnel files across multiple federal departments, creating risks of blackmail, surveillance, bribery, and coercion of US officials and assets. Moreover, many of the DOGE employees accessing these data have known ties to NRx's radical ideology (see Appendix 2).

- **DOGE's uncertain legal status raises Constitutional questions.** If DOGE is an advisory committee, as multiple lawsuits contend, its operations may violate the Federal Advisory Committee Act. If, instead, the bulk of DOGE's operations occur inside the U.S. DOGE Service Temporary Organization, it is then subject to the legal requirements for temporary organizations laid out in 5 USC 3161, and is subject to transparency statutes such as the Freedom of Information Act.

- **Criminal conflict of interest:** It appears that DOGE employees were hired privately by Musk, and most had been employed by Musk prior to joining DOGE. It is unclear how or by whom they are currently paid in their powerful new roles. However, to the extent that they are operating as federal employees, they are subject to criminal conflict of interest statutes.

- **Privacy and data security laws:** Reports indicate that DOGE employees have A-suite level clearance at the General Services Administration (GSA), which allows them access to agency spaces and IT systems. It is unclear whether they have been appropriately

vetted for that access. Nevertheless, they have gained control over highly sensitive data at the Office of Personnel Management, the Treasury Department, and the US Agency for International Development. The Privacy Act of 1974 and its follow-on statutes, such as the E-Government Act of 2002, tightly control how executive branch agencies may handle sensitive data, particularly personally identifiable data.

C3. DOGE | And the Neoreactionary Playbook

DOGE's structure and operations match the Curtis Yarvin's "RAGE" (Retire All Government Employees) strategy. Yarvin's writings contend that the "deep state" must be dismantled from within, clearing the way for quick executive decision-making and action. In particular, RAGE envisions:

- **Inserting ideological loyalists into key government functions** by side-stepping hiring and vetting processes meant to protect citizens, and the country, from political retribution, conflicts of interest, and interference by foreign powers. At least one of the young DOGE programmers has publicly shared ideological ties with Curtis Yarvin; another shared content tied to Neo-Nazi influencers.

- **Centralizing decision-making** among a closed circle of elite actors—ideally, **executives with vested interests**. DOGE's secretive nature, its ideological extremism, its considerable financial conflicts of interest, and its employees' fealty to Musk individually all closely resemble Yarvin's vision of an autocratic "CEO."

- **Recruiting young, technically skilled individuals for ideological projects** is a hallmark of the neoreactionary movement. Musk, Thiel, and their networks have long championed youth-led companies and experiments, where teenagers and early-twenties recruits are given disproportionate power in government, technology, and finance. This is evident in projects like the following:

    -
    - **The Thiel Fellowship:** Created by Peter Thiel in 2010, the fellowship encourages young talent to drop out of college and work on disruptive projects. Many recipients go on to work in surveillance, artificial intelligence, and cryptocurrency industries where Thiel has direct investments.
    - **The Network School & State**: Balaji Srinivasan, a major figure in cryptocurrency circles, forfeited his US citizenship to move to Singapore. Like other neoreactionaries, Srinivasan advocates founder-led societies that operate independently of traditional nation-states (The Network State: How to Start a New Country.) In service of this vision, Balaji launched the "Network School", a three-month long program for "dark" talent. Prospective students were assessed based on their alignment with key propositions, including the belief that Bitcoin can replace the U.S. dollar, and a preference for AI over traditional human judicial systems. No journalists were permitted, consistent with his philosophy to "Go direct. Build your own media."

D. Events Inside the Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

D1. OPM | What Happened

OPM manages the federal workforce, serving as a central hub for federal employment policy and as a central repository for employee records.

- In November 2024, Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy authored a Wall Street Journal op-ed, stating their key goal: massive cuts to the federal workforce.

- Musk appointed loyalists to top positions at the OPM. In particular, OPM Chief of Staff Amanda Scales was until days ago an employee of xAI. These individuals quickly moved to centralize control of federal employees in the OPM.

- With Scales's blessing, DOGE employees gained unprecedented access to OPM systems and data. These include personally identifying data, such as Social Security numbers, pay grades, and security clearances, as well as detailed personnel files. DOGE employees installed new email servers, reportedly unsecured, to communicate to all federal employees.

- With these new communication tools, Musk's appointees have acted quickly to assert centralized authority over the federal workforce.

    - On January 21, 2025, OPM Acting Director Charles Ezell released a memo outlining steps to implement anti-"DEIA" executive orders, beginning with a pre-written email directing employees to report "DEIA" activities to the OPM—not agency leaders: "...please report all facts and circumstances to **DEIAtruth@opm.gov** within 10 days...failure to report this information within 10 days may result in adverse consequences." The adverse consequences remain unspecified.
    - On January 27, 2025, Ezell released a second memo (authored by another new apppointee, Noah Peters) describing the implementation of the "Restoring Accountability to Policy-Influencing Positions Within the Federal Workforce" Executive Order. Again, OPM directed agency heads to would reclassify many civil service jobs as "Schedule F," excluding them from collective bargaining agreements.
    - On January 28, 2025, "HR@OPM.gov" sent each and every federal employee an email headed "Fork in the Road." These messages outlined what was ostensibly a "deferred resignation" or "buyout" offer and laid out a January 6 deadline to accept.
    - On February 4, 2025, Musk-appointed OPM officials made a similar offer to all Central Intelligence Agency employees.

- Currently: Existing OPM employees remain largely locked out of these processes; some reported that they experienced professional retaliation, such as being reassigned or placed on leave, after objecting to DOGE employees' actions.

D2. OPM | Potential Legal, Economic, and National Security Implications

Like the structure and operation of DOGE itself, the insertion of Musk loyalists into OPM, DOGE employees' control over sensitive data, and OPM communications since January 20, 2025 raise serious legal, economic, and national security questions.

- **OPM data can be used to blackmail, surveil, bribe, or coerce federal employees.** In addition to access to ordinary payroll/etc data, control of OPM gives DOGE (or foreign powers and non-state actors collaborating with or targeting DOGE) access to the entire background check files for all personnel with security clearances. China obtained OPM data in 2015 in a feat regarded as a major win, but that data is a decade old. This data amounts to powerful leverage over federal employees who might otherwise refuse to cooperate with unconstitutional orders.

- **DOGE access to OPM records likely violates federal privacy law:** Government personnel data are highly sensitive; they include not only personally identifiable information that could be used as Privacy Act of 1974 and its follow-on statutes tightly control how executive branch agencies may handle sensitive data, particularly personally identifiable data. The E-Government Act of 2002 requires a Privacy Impact Assessment before any significant changes to an agency's handling or storage of personally identifiable information.

- **OPM operations are opaque to Congressional and public oversight.** Like DOGE, OPM is bound by the Freedom of Information Act. More generally—particularly because existing OPM public servants have been excluded from both data access and decisionmaking since the installation of Musk-aligned leadership—OPM currently operates outside Congressional or public oversight, raising basic questions about checks and balances.

- **Musk-appointed OPM officials may bring serious financial conflicts of interest.** Former Musk employees inside OPM, including its Chief of Staff, are subject to criminal conflict of interest statutes, as well as government ethics rules. To the extent that these individuals retain financial or personal ties to Musk organizations or Musk himself, they create the potential for significant conflicts of interest. None of the Musk appointees has so far produced a financial disclosure regarding their continuing ties to Musk organizations.

- **OPM had no legal authority to advertise a deferred resignation program**. The purported terms of the Musk appointees' January 28 "Fork in the Road" email likely violate the Administrate Leave Act and statutes governing voluntary separation payments. In addition—and as discussed above—agencies may not independently offer funds not appropriated by Congress. Appropriations is a key power granted to Congress

by the Constitution. Arrogation of the power of the purse should be read as a threat to our system of checks and balances.

D3. OPM | And the Neoreactionary Playbook

The changes observed inside OPM, like the organization and operation of DOGE, align closely with neoreactionary talking points and strategies, including RAGE. DOGE employees are the agents of Musk's centralization efforts; OPM provides the infrastructures necessary to enact it.

- Yarvin and others have championed the **"hollowing out" of the government's administrative workforce**, via a two-pronged strategy: leaders should encourage mass voluntary resignations and they should make the workplace unpleasant and unproductive for those who remain. OPM messages and memoranda to federal employees since January 20, retaliatory firings of career officials, and many other actions have created a climate of fear and uncertainty—not only inside OPM but across all federal agencies.

- **Changes inside the OPM closely resemble Yarvin's vision** of a small, elite, ideologically aligned executive branch, serving the interests of the autocrat/CEO. As at USDS and other agencies, career employees bound by law to eschew partisan political activity have been sidelined in favor of loyalists drawn directly from Musk's organizations.

- **Centralized control of information infrastructures** is a key operational element of Yarvin's plan. The OPM takeover occurred as soon as DOGE was formally instantiated, allowing Musk loyalists access to both sensitive personnel data and instant communication with federal government workers. These actions radically altered OPM's status. What had been a recordkeeping, policy-elaborating agency was now inserting itself directly into the daily lives, and lines of control, of millions of workers.

Vice President Vance has previously articulated this blueprint and his willingness to escalate a constitutional crisis: “So there’s this guy Curtis Yarvin, who has written about some of these things…I think that what Trump should do, if I was giving him one piece of advice: Fire every single mid-level bureaucrat, every civil servant in the administrative state, replace them with our people….And when the courts stop you…stand before the country, and say…the chief justice has made his ruling. Now let him enforce it.”

The capture of OPM is not just an administrative shake-up—it represents an existential threat to independent, law-abiding government operations.

E. Actions and Rhetoric to Watch

Neoreactionary ideology provides a coherent frame for several seemingly disparate Musk projects.

- **Government contracts**: Musk organizations hold at least $15 billion in government contracts, primarily with NASA but also reaching into defense communications. The US Army relies heavily on Starlink infrastructure. It also appears that Starlink plays, or will soon play, a major role in intelligence communications. Viewed as part of the neoreactionary project, controlling these critical infrastructures is a key step toward controlling military operations. Musk has used his communications network to override military decision-making before, halting Ukrainian drone attacks on Russian forces at a critical moment.

- **Greenland and Mars**: A core tenet of neoreactionary ideology is the replacement of nation-states with "network states." But states require territory. Technocracy Inc., a predecessor to the Neoreactionary movement whose one-time director was Elon Musk's grandfather, proposed a North American Technate where the entire continent of North America would be united under one Technocratic Super State. There is currently a Peter Thiel-backed "network state" project called Praxis in Greenland. Musk's public statements about colonizing Mars also can be read as part of a territorial project.

    - **Musk**: “Girl, you’re not the governor of Canada anymore, so it doesn't matter what you say,” Musk said in response to Justin Trudeau’s post, in which he said there isn’t “a snowball’s chance in hell that Canada would become part of the United States”, January 7, 2025
    - **Musk:** "If the people of Greenland want to be part of America, which I hope they do, they would be most welcome!”, on January 7, 2025 on X.

- **Crypto**: Musk's cryptocurrency boosterism is well established, and lines up with much of Neoreactionary thought. The anonymity of cryptocurrency exchanges facilitates new "accountability" mechanisms for Neoreactionary leaders. Buying $TRUMP is functionally equivalent to proof of deposit in a Swiss bank account owned by Trump, but anyone can buy it: Musk, the Communist Party of China, Alphabet, Palantir. In the Neoreactionary playbook, cryptocurrency will ultimately allow network state CEO monarchs to reach decisions by, in effect, "shareholder vote." Along the way, $TRUMP may serve as a mechanism of financial control, removing Presidential accountability from Congress, the judiciary, and American citizens, and handing it to unknown, anonymous parties.

Appendices

1. Neoreactionary Thought Leaders in Their Own Words
2. Known DOGE Employees and Backgrounds
3. National Security Threats: Foreign Ties and Single-Source Military Risks
4. Attacks on the information environment

Appendix 1: Neoreactionary Thought Leaders in Their Own Words

Radical destruction of the Constitutional order and the nation-state

- **Yarvin:** [asked how to change 'the regime']: "**You have to break it in a single step** (...) I would divide the things that are needed, using the rocket analogy, into a first stage and the second stage. **The first stage is basically the way in which you establish absolute power.**"

- **Vance*:*** "I think that what Trump should do, if I was giving him one piece of advice: **Fire every single mid-level bureaucrat, every civil servant in the administrative state, replace them with our people**. . . And when the courts stop you, stand before the country, and say 'the chief justice has made his ruling. Now let him enforce it.'" (James Pogue, "Inside the New Right, Where Peter Thiel Is Placing His Biggest Bets," *Vanity Fair*, April 20, 2022)

- **Balaji Srinivasan: "What I'm really calling for is something like Tech Zionism**. A movement supported by a global network to take back territory in the city, floor by floor, street by street, block by block, policeman by policeman. You have a foothold of private property and you have a group membership (...) the hard part is to take control of the streets. How do you fence off of the streets and make it clear that it's under grey [his self-ascribed tribe of visionaries] control." (*September 2023 on the Moment of Zen podcast)*

- **Thiel: "I no longer believe that freedom and democracy are compatible."** (*"The Education of a Libertarian", Cato Institute, 2009)*

- **Nick Land: "**For the hardcore neo-reactionaries, democracy is not merely doomed, it is doom itself. Fleeing it approaches an ultimate imperative." (The Dark Enlightenment)

Privately owned corporation model for a new state

- **Musk**: "I think it's a false dichotomy to look at government and sort of industry as separate…**government is…the ultimate corporation**," calling it a "monopoly that can't

go bankrupt, or usually cannot go bankrupt." (*CNBC Interview, 12/10/2020, https://www.cnbc.com/2020/12/10/elon-musk-government-is-the-ultimate-corporation.html*)

- **Yarvin:** "In a world where voters elect Trump with a mandate to just take over the government—as completely as the Allies took over the government of Germany in 1945—he will probably screw it up, anyway. Yet he doesn't have to screw it up. **The only way to not screw it up, for Donald Trump, is to be the chairman of the board, and delegate to a single executive ready to be the plenary CEO of America.**" (*Curtis Yarvin, "The Trials of Trump," Gray Mirror Substack, June 6, 2024*)

- **Thiel:** "[W]e are in a deadly race between politics and technology. **. .**The fate of our world may depend on the effort of a single person who builds or propagates the machinery of freedom that makes the world safe for capitalism." (*"The Education of a Libertarian", Cato Institute, 2009)*

- **Thiel:** "if we want to increase freedom, we want to increase the number of countries", at a *2009 Conference of the Seasteading Institute*

Unchecked executive power

- **Yarvin:** (describing his blog) "It's a neo-f—," I said. "Um, no, it's not really a neofascist hate blog. I just call it that sometimes to shock people. It's. . .an anti-democracy blog. . .You've got to admit, it's an under-served market." (*How I Stopped Believing in Democracy, Unqualified Reservations, January 31, 2008)*

- **Yarvin:** "Until this "unitary executive" is so much "more powerful" than the present office that the President considers *both* the judicial and legislative branches purely *ceremonial* and *advisory*—with the same level of *actual sovereignty* as Charles III today—the "unitary executive" *will not work*." "A Conversation About Monarchy", *Gray Mirror*, March 12, 2024.

- **Yarvin**: And so, you're spinning up this new executive branch and the powers of your new executive branch are effectively unlimited. **And because, essentially, if they're limited by some kind of law, well, I'll tell you what the law is. The law is the current executive branch.",** at a private Harvard talk in October 2023

- **Yarvin**: "I think that actually the support of the democratic public is a cipher; I think that actually all you need is command of the police", in October 2024 interview with the European Conservative

- **Yarvin**: "If Americans want to change their government, **they need to get rid of dictator phobia**….One way of dealing with that is.... hire two executives, make sure they work together and there is really no other solution…" (*BILtalks, "BIL2012 - Mencius Moldbug: How to Reboot the US Government," YouTube video, 18:30, posted October 20, 2012, https://youtu.be/ZluMysK2B1E (17:10–18:10*)

- **Yarvin:** "And so **you're basically federalizing the guard, you're establishing direct presidential command of the police everywhere**. So you have a whole, you completely reintegrate the security hierarchy, you need to do that very, very fast, and very, very decisively. And establish, drop in, a completely new chain of command there very quickly, so that you don't get little fragments of like bullshit, right? You know, the thing is, **almost all the rank-and-file cops are gonna be with your right wing revolution, right?** Whereas, it's the higher level that need to be rapidly [unintelligible] **You know, one thing that's really useful in any kind of regime change is to have pre printed up is just armbands. You know? We're at war, you know, it really makes an impression right there** (...) So, take control of the police. You do not want to have any security problems. So, you want to play very rapidly." *at private Harvard talk in October 2023*

Eugenics/Rule by the highest IQ

- **Thiel: "**For those of us who are libertarian in 2009, our education culminates with the knowledge that the broader education of the body politic has become a fool's errand." *"The Education of a Libertarian", Cato Institute, 2009)*

- **Musk:** (Reposting an anonymous claim that appears to have appeared originally on 4chan in 2021) **"...[A] republic of high status males is best for decision making."** (*The Independent, "Elon Musk suggests support for replacing democracy with government of 'high-status males", September 3 2024)*

- **Musk:** "[W]ealth, education, and being secular are all indicative of a low birth rate [but] **if each successive generation of smart people has fewer kids, that's probably bad.**" (*Ashlee Vance, "Elon Musk: Tesla, SpaceX, and the Quest for a Fantastic Future", Harper Collins 2015*)

- **Yarvin:** "It is very difficult to argue that the Civil War made anyone's life more pleasant, including that of freed slaves. . .*If you look at the living conditions for an African American in the South, they are absolutely at their nadir between 1865 and 1875.*" (*New York Times interview, January 18, 2025)*

Dismantling democratic institutions and stripping government down to "core functions"

- **Yarvin**: "But—**if you agree with me that democracy is the problem, not the solution—there's also nothing wrong with a military coup** in which the military expresses this same realization...Therefore, **it is justified in seizing, and either dissolving or privatizing** according to its best judgment, all subsidized or officially supported information organs of the old mediocracy, including universities, newspapers, TV and radio stations, schools, etc. Probably the first option is the safest….In a post-mediocratic state, education is a purely parental responsibility. Young people will learn whatever their parents choose to teach them, or have them taught, or expose them to. Official involvement in this process, even in the form of subsidies, is unthinkable.

Likewise, journalism is a purely private function." (*Mencius Moldbug, "Mediocracy: Definition, Etiology and Treatment," Unqualified Reservations, September 9, 2007, https://www.unqualified-reservations.org/2007/09/mediocracy-definition-etiology-and/*)

- **Musk**: "USAID is a criminal organization. It's time for it to DIE"

- **Musk**: "You have committed a crime", in response to a post on X that revealed the name of the six DOGE employee. US Attorney General Edward R. Martin Jr. offered his support to Musk, posting a letter on X that read "I recognize that some of the staff at DOGE has been targeted publicly," and added, "Any threats, confrontations, or other actions in any way that impact their work may break numerous laws."

- **Yarvin**: "You need to basically cross the Rubicon. Okay. So, in crossing the Rubicon and restoring the true constitution, because this is a constitutional presidency, you're just removing the encumbrance of, you know, everything from you know, Marbury vs. Madison, you know, on down(...) And here's what I'm going to do guys, I'm going to create a new executive branch. I'm actually going to spin up, from nothing at all, an entirely new executive branch. And it's going to basically say, there are two kinds of things that the existing agencies do: necessary things and unnecessary things. You know, for example, if you look at the current executive branch, if you look at the agencies (...)If I turn that off, what happens? Anything? Nothing, right? (...) Like, why do you need an Embassy in Paris? You don't need an Embassy in Paris. **You know, and there's a lot of more thinking behind shutting down the State Department.** But like, essentially you do need to keep, like, the air traffic controllers, right? Okay, great. The Coast Guard rescue sailors. Okay, probably don't need that to stop. Right. You know, and, and that is actually a very small set of things."

- **JD Vance**: "I think that what Trump should do is fire every single middle-level bureaucrat, every civil servant in the administrative state and replace them with 'our people'", *September 2021 on the Jack Murphy podcast*

Replacing national currency with cryptocurrency

- **Nick Land**: "(1) Replacement of representational democracy by constitutional republicanism (or still more extreme anti-political governmental mechanisms); (2) Massive downsizing of government and its rigorous confinement to core functions (at most); (3) Restoration of hard money (precious metal coins and bullion deposit notes) and abolition of central banking; (4) Dismantling of state monetary and fiscal discretion, thus abolishing practical macroeconomics and liberating the autonomous (or 'catallactic') economy. (This point is redundant, since it follows rigorously from 2 & 3 above, but it's the real prize, so worth emphasizing.)" *4 Steps to Modernity 2.0* in The Dark Enlightenment

Appendix 2: Known DOGE Employees and Backgrounds

- Akash Bobba – A recent UC Berkeley graduate, Bobba was previously an intern at Meta, Palantir, and Bridgewater Associates, giving him exposure to surveillance technology, investment analytics, and algorithmic trading—all areas with potential conflicts in government oversight.

- Edward Coristine – Appears to have graduated from high school recently and was enrolled at Northeastern University. His only prior experience includes a three-month Neuralink internship, yet he is now reportedly influencing OPM and GSA policies. His X.com profile biography reads: "There are cathedrals everywhere for those with the eyes to see it," a reference to Curtis Yarvin's "Cathedral."

- Luke Farritor – A former SpaceX intern and current Thiel Fellow, who dropped out of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. He is now embedded within GSA operations, raising concerns about Thiel-linked influence over government infrastructure.

- Gautier Cole Killian – Former McGill University student and Jump Trading engineer specializing in high-frequency trading. Now volunteering at DOGE, despite lacking any prior government experience.

- Gavin Kliger – Attended UC Berkeley until 2020 and later worked at Databricks, an AI company. His Substack posts suggest ideological alignment with far-right anti-government narratives, raising concerns over extremist influence.

- Ethan Shaotran – A Harvard senior who founded Energize AI, an OpenAI-backed startup. Despite still being a student, he was granted A-suite level clearance at GSA, giving him access to high-level government systems.

Appendix 3: The National Security Risks of DOGE Activities

BLUF: The activities of DOGE may constitute a clear and present threat to U.S. national security given Musk's control of DOGE and his financial indebtedness to China, close ties to Russia, and the U.S. Government's increasing dependence on his companies for critical defense capabilities. It is entirely feasible that Musk could wield the sensitive (and classified) data, the Treasury payments system, and USG IT infrastructure that DOGE now controls to advance the aims of America's principle geopolitical adversaries for his own ends.

The Situation: DOGE has seized control of (and excluded civil servants from):

- **Treasury's payments system**, **enabling them to extract troves of sensitive data** about individuals and organizations receiving payments from the U.S. Government **and the ability to deny payment to any individuals and organizations** that they wish, despite Congressional appropriations.

- **OPM databases** containing sensitive information about all USG employees, a treasure trove of data for US adversaries.
    - China breached OPM in 2015 but that info is a decade old.
- **GSA**, which provides IT services and infrastructure for the non-defense agencies of the federal government, enabling DOGE to potential surveil federal employees email and online activities and/or deny federal employees access to their computers.
- **DOGE has effectively shut down USAID**, a statutory federal agency, the international development and humanitarian arm of the US Government. USAID's funding and actions are critical to competing with China and Russia for political influence in the developing world, and supporting democracy abroad against authoritarian influence.

Musk is directly and personally directing DOGE activities across the Federal Government. DOGE is accountable solely to Elon Musk. Its employees are personally loyal to Musk, and they are acting at his behest and command.

Elon Musk's personal activities, financial ties, and companies constitute a profound risk to U.S. national security because:

- **Musk is intimately and covertly engaged with China and Russia, the United States' top two geopolitical adversaries and the focus of US national security and defense policy for the last decade.**
    - Musk was denied a USG security clearance and is being investigated for violating national security protocols.
    - Covert meetings and phone calls with Putin and with Chinese leadership.
- Former Russian President and Putin confidant Demetry Medviedev predicted in 2022 that Elon Musk would "soon" become US President. Musk called the prediction "epic."
    - No criticism of Russia and China while disparaging and actively seeking to undermine longstanding US Allies and democracies.
- **Musk's financial interests are dependent on China**, which could easily (and may already have) exerted influence over Musk's political, corporate, and bureaucratic.
    - Musk has a $100B stake in Tesla (13% of its stock). Tesla is dependent on China for auto production and sales. China control's Tesla's fate, and at least ¼ of Musk's fortune.
- Musk borrowed at least $1.4 billion from banks controlled by the Chinese government to help build Tesla's Shanghai gigafactory. Tesla's Shanghai plant opened in 2019 and is the company's largest factory, accounting for half of Tesla's global car production, according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

- China is Tesla's second largest market (only a hair behind the US), and its only major growth market. Tesla sells 36.7% of its cars in China and Tesla's 2024 sales in China rose 8.8% to a record high of more than 657,000 cars in 2024, in a year when its annual global deliveries fell for the first time.

- After adamantly refusing to allow the sale of TikTok by ByteDance to a foreign party, China is reportedly considering a sale to Elon Musk. Why, unless the CCP is confident it can control Musk and TikTok, and stands to benefit under his ownership? Why would the same national security concerns that animated the TikTok ban law not still apply in light of Musk's dependence on China?

- **Musk's companies are financed by Russian oligarchs**

    - US-sanctioned Russian billionaire oligarch Suleyman Kerimov owned a 1% stake of SpaceX via a shell trust starting in 2017.
    - 8VC, which employs the sons of two US-sanctioned Russian oligarchs, helped finance Musk's purchase of Twitter. 8VC's staff includes the sons of two Russian oligarchs, including Petr Aven, US-sanctioned founder of Alpha Bank, Russia's largest bank.

- **Key portions of the U.S. Defense, Intelligence and Space enterprise are sole-source dependent on SpaceX,** which Musk controls and comprises ~$150B (or more than ⅓) of his total fortune.

    - SpaceX has benefited from nearly $19.8 billion in federal contracts since 2008. Most of that money − $14.4 billion − went to NASA and $5.32 billion went to the Defense Department to pay for SpaceX rocket launches and satellites.
    - SpaceX holds more than $700 million in contracts for Space Force's National Security Space Launch program.
    - Of the ~10K satellites in space, 60% belong to Starlink.
    - The US Military is becoming increasingly dependent on Starlink.
    - SpaceX is building a network of hundreds of spy satellites under a classified contract with a U.S. intelligence agency. The network is being built by SpaceX's Starshield business unit under a $1.8 billion contract signed in 2021 with the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), which manages US spy satellites. This system is said to be vital to maintaining an intelligence edge over China, but…

- Given Musk's ties to China, this raises questions about the integrity of the intelligence collected and whether it would be shared with China via SpaceX.

    - Musk has unilaterally denied access to Starlink to Ukraine for military operations in its defense against Russian invasion and denied its use to Taiwan at China's behest.

Appendix 4: Control of the Information Environment

Information Environment | What Happened

Trump's Day One EO “Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship” is the culmination of a years-long assault on the US information environment, the pace of which has accelerated in recent months as social media platforms have abandoned any efforts at content moderation and Neoreactionary true believers have taken quasi-governmental roles.

- In November 2022, Elon Musk acquired Twitter, now X. He immediately cut safety teams, scaled back content moderation policies, and welcomed individuals and groups that had previously been banned for inciting violence and hate speech, including notorious white supremacist Nick Fuentes.

- In August 2024 Meta formally dismantled CrowdTangle, a research tool widely used by academics, watchdog organizations, and journalists to track how disinformation and misinformation spreads across Meta platforms.

- Project 2025 laid out a strategy to weaponize anti discrimination protections against social media companies that restrict or limit the visibility of content that might be considered "political," which has been interpreted to include election-related disinformation and related conspiracy theories.

- In January 2025, Mark Zuckerberg announced his support for the incoming administration along with new policies: Meta would begin eliminating fact checkers in the United States and around the world, as well as rolling back prohibitions on hate speech. Zuckerberg then contributed extensively to Trump's inauguration fund, and attended in a place of honor with other tech CEOs.

- NTSB and White House press releases have been moved to X, forcing all media outlets and constituents to register with X in order to view official government correspondence, and opening the threat of a private platform banning for any outlet or individual targeted by the administration.

- Many official data sets have been removed, hampering fact checking. For example, the claim that USAID spent $50 million on condoms in Gaza was fact-checked with public USAID data -- a data set that is no longer available.

- On February 3, President Trump signed an order creating a sovereign wealth fund, saying it could be used to purchase TikTok. This came less than three weeks after the Chinese TikTok company publicly thanked Trump for pledging to restore service in the United States.

Information Environment | Legal, Democratic, and National Security Implications

Together, these actions paint a picture of increasingly centralized control over US social media policies, coordinated at the highest levels among private actors. Official media sources are moving to private venues, and the government is considering outright funding the purchase of an additional social media network. These changes -- together with the removal of official data sources -- amount to a seizure of control over the information environment.

- America's adversaries actively seek to sow conflict and exacerbate existing societal differences, often using social media to heighten antagonism between groups and weaken societal cohesion.

- Removing data sets prevents fact-checking by independent sources.

- The content moderation that has now been eliminated by social media companies was originally put into place after Facebook posts were instrumental in facilitating widespread violence and ethnic cleansing in Ethiopia and Myanmar.

- Official correspondence (e.g. from the NTSB) has been moved to X, forcing all media outlets and constituents to (re)register with X in order to view official government correspondence, and raising concerns that critics of Musk/the government might be banned.

Information Environment | And the Neoreactionary Agenda

The Neoreactionary movement aims to blur private and public power, allowing private actors (like tech CEOs) to exercise powerful control over society without restraints from elected representatives. This attempt to seize control of the information environment follows that playbook, recruiting private actors like Zuckerberg with a mix of business threats and personal outreach.

Moreover, Neoreactionary social media activity relies heavily on shitposting, edgelord behavior, and other discursive styles that walk the line between hate speech, advocacy for violence, and "jokes." Removing moderation from social media may seem neutral, but in fact skews the online environment, making disinformation more powerful and damaging the social fabric of online spaces.